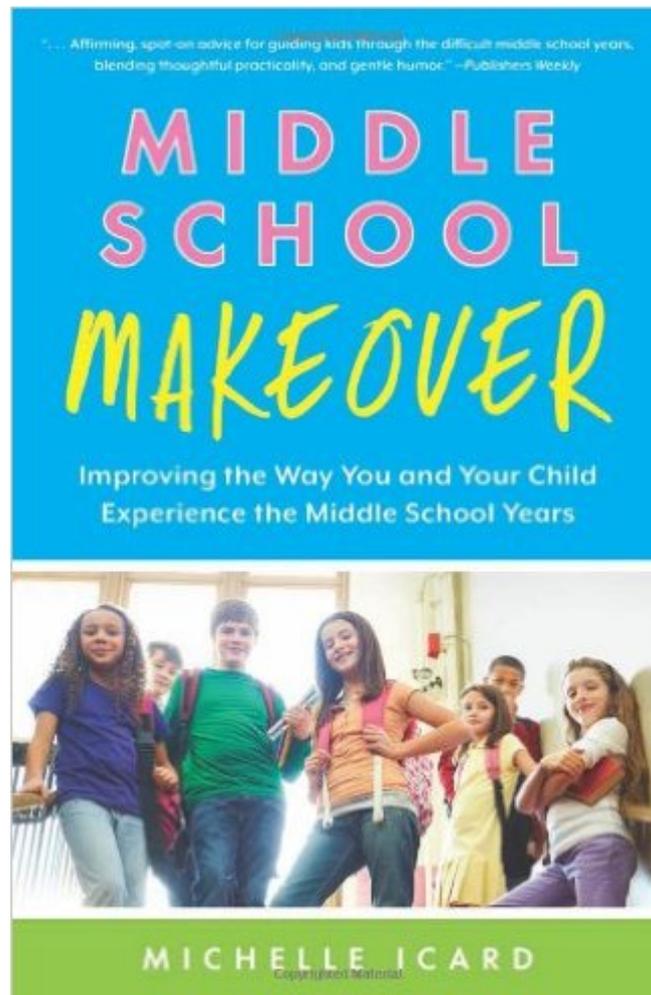


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# Middle School Makeover: Improving The Way You And Your Child Experience The Middle School Years



## Synopsis

Middle School Makeover is a guide for parents and educators to help the tweens in their lives navigate the socially fraught hallways, gyms, and cafeterias of middle school. The book helps parents, teachers, and other adults in middle school settings to understand the social dilemmas and other issues that kids today face. Author Michelle Icard covers a large range of topics, beginning with helping us understand what is happening in the brains of tweens and how these neurological development affects decision-making and questions around identity. She also addresses social media, dating, and peer exclusion. Using both recent research and her personal, extensive experience working with middle-school-aged kids and their parents, Icard offers readers concrete and practical advice for guiding children through this chaotic developmental stage while also building their confidence.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (100 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

Middle School Makeover strikes several important balances that ultimately would have otherwise dulled the efficacy of the information. It is both easy to read and follow/quick read yet also extremely informative. It provides both general information on your child's development (how the brain is changing, why they are behaving as they are) but also very specific information on how to deal with the most common problems middle schoolers face. It is friendly and personal yet the ideas feel very universal and applicable. There is a lot of technical information (with appropriate citing of resources) and yet the information never overwhelms. The Middle School years are those starting around 6th grade and up to high school. But those with younger kids, 4-6th grade, will find this very useful in

preparing how to handle the upcoming tween years. A lot of the advice in the book is also very suitable for high school kids as well. The book is broken down into three parts. The first 1/3 discusses why tweens change, how their brains are developing, and why they act/react as they do. There is a lot of information, some technical, but the author does an excellent job of making that information accessible without dumbing it down too much. The next 1/3 goes over specific situations and how to handle them: being bullied, being the bully, social integration or ostracization, technology (cell phones, internet apps, Instagram, etc.), giving them independence vs keeping them safe, etc. The author uses both specific examples (e.g., a frenemy at school telling your daughter her shirt is ugly) but also shows how there is a universal truth in each of the approaches that makes them applicable to a lot of different situations.

In my attempt to raise a tween who attends middle school WITH ME every day, I have read several parenting/self-help/survival books. So far, this has been my favorite. Michelle Icard is from Charlotte, NC, has a web presence with both her own blog and FaceBook page, and in general makes a lot of sense. She helped me understand that my twelve-year-old daughter really does not hate me, but if she doesn't pretend to (or even think so) she will never develop her own "selfness" (my word, not Michelle's) and may end up living with me forever. This really put things in perspective for me really fast. Admittedly, I'm being a little silly about Michelle's book, which is really incredible, but her advice is so clear, easy to read, and actually useful that I can't help but feel like I was talking to a good friend who had been to tween war and lived to tell about it. From Michelle, I learned that my daughter often thinks I'm angry because this age group is notoriously terrible at reading facial expressions (that aren't selfies, that is) so they always think you're mad, no matter what you actually feel. Therefore, the solution is "Botox Brow". Don't schedule an appointment with a plastic surgeon, just read the book and you'll learn more about the power of the "Brow". Michelle also addresses several concerns many parents of children this age have from budding sexuality, to clothing wars, to frenemies, to bullying (even when your kid is the bully). She also provides a wonderful step-by-step process to help you as a parent help your little darling with prefrontal cortex issues deal with problem solving without making them helpless or depriving them of the delights of finding their own solutions in life.

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